The District Technology Training Plan for Prince George’s County Public Schools

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**Our District:**

Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) provide education services for nearly 127,000 students in more than 200 schools and other sites. Serving these students are just over 8,300 teachers, 1,300 professional staff, and 1,500 instructional assistants (MSDE, 2011). The operating budget for FY 2011 is over $1.6 billion. (Financial Plan, 2011)

The technology infrastructure of the district has been consistently updated over several years. Current technologies include laptops issued and projectors issued to teachers, classroom desktop computers with internet access, and mobile labs and file servers for staff and students (Technology Plan, 2008). As of the most recent technology plan, 50,000 computers were reported on the district network.

**The Need:**

PGCPS currently offers many training courses to teaching and professional staff in many of the software and hardware investments made by the district. Searching through the Technology Training Team's web page, one finds course offerings on Microsoft® Office, Google Apps, interactive whiteboards, and iPads, to name a few (Division of Information Technology). Not only does PGCPS offer a plethora of training, but participants in trainings are reporting positive reactions to training. A November 2011 report claims a 92% perception of quality rating among staff surveyed (Keane & Sunmonu, 2011).

The need for this district is not more or higher quality technology. However, the current plan takes a top down approach to teacher training. Teachers feel they have little input in the training sessions offered at their sites, and often trainings allow little opportunity for teachers to share their own knowledge. Furthermore, the current technology plan consists of a list of objectives that teachers should master, yet does not create a roadmap for how teachers will meet the Maryland Teaching Technology Standards (MTTS), nor how they will be assessed for mastery. Finally, training is focused more on the use of a software application or hardware tool, not on actual classroom application. Of all the shortcomings of the current technology training programs is a failure to see widespread application of workshop materials in classrooms.

The real need for the district is threefold. First, training must be into a unified curriculum with full online support. Second teachers must be encouraged to develop their own training goals and self assess their progress toward mastering MTTS. Third, training must facilitate a culture of collaboration and networking among teachers in order to support application of training into classroom teaching .

**The Audience:**

This training plan is one specifically designed to meet the needs of PGCPS teachers, not administrative or other district professionals. PGCPS teaching staff is highly qualified, as identified by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). According to the Maryland Report card for 2011, 93% of all district teachers are fully certified, with over 60 percent holding an Advanced Professional certificate (MSDE 2011).

**Goals:**

As a result of this training program:

1. Teachers will self assess their technology strengths and weaknesses.

2. Teachers will develop an individualized plan for mastering any deficiencies in meeting MTTS.

3. Teachers will develop a strong professional community that supports collaboration and sharing of best technological practices in the classroom.

4. Teachers will apply their mastery of MTTS to their instructional practice, to the betterment of student learning.

**Content Analysis:**

The following are courses/workshops needed by teachers:

***Personal Skills Assessment Clinic*:** This workshop is intended to be the stepping stone from which all other training will follow. Teachers of all technological skill levels will be expected to start with this workshop, in which they will create a personal profile of skills mastered and skills not mastered. This profile will be aligned to the MTTS. By the end of the clinic, teachers will have developed a personal plan for technology training and will have become familiar with the other courses offered to aid their master of MTTS.

Grade Levels: Available for all grade levels

Skill Levels: All skill levels

***Data Analysis using Performance Matters and Edusoft®*:** This course is designed to train teachers on the districts two data analysis software tools, *Performance Matters* and *Edusoft®*. Teachers will learn the basics of accessing the databases, using the software's included analysis tools, and will practice manipulating data from their own classes. Meets MTTS Standard I: Technology Information Access, Evaluation, Processing and Application.

Grade Levels: Available for all grade levels

Skill Levels: All skill levels

***Electronic Communication using Google Solutions*:** This course is designed for teachers new to using Google's Gmail and other communication applications that all teaching staff have access to. Teachers will learn about important features of PGCPS Gmail, with a focus on practical application to their work. Topics include creating contacts, using mailing lists, and searching messages. Meets MTTS Standard II: Communication.

Grade Levels: All

Skill Levels: Low to moderate.

***Creating a course web page using Google Sites I*:** This course is designed to help teachers create a usable course web page on the PGCPS Google server. Course is hands-on, with teachers creating their web pages on site. Meets MTTS Standard II: Communication.

Grade Levels: All

Skill Levels: Low to moderate.

***Creating a course web page using Google Sites II*:** This course takes over where *Google Sites I* leaves off. Covers the more advanced features of Google sites, including using widgets, imbedding video, and uploading documents. Meets MTTS Standard II: Communication.

Grade Levels: All

Skill Levels: Moderate to High

***Understanding the PGCPS AUP*:** This course will lead teachers through the PGCPS' Acceptable Use Policy for employees and students. Teachers will look at the important points in the AUP, as well as learn how to apply the AUP to what they do in the classroom. Meets MTTS Standard III: Legal, Social, and Ethical Issues

Grade Levels: All

Skill Levels: All

***Technology as a tool for assessment*:** This course focuses on moving teachers beyond Scantron® and introduces other options to improve student assessment. Topics include online survey software, using Google Apps for assessment, and creating assessments on Edusoft®. Meets MTTS Standard IV: Assessment for Administration and Instruction.

Grade Levels: All

Skill Levels: Low to moderate

***Teaching with interactive whiteboards*:** This course introduces teachers to the use of interactive white boards in the classrooms and how to create effective and engaging interactive lessons students will enjoy. Teachers will be introduced to important hardware and software features of their interactive whiteboards and will create their own presentations that could be used in their classrooms. Meets MTTS Standard V: Integrating Technology into the Curriculum and Instruction.

Grade Levels: All

Skill Levels: Low to moderate

***Mobile Technologies in the Classroom***: This course introduces teachers to the possibilities offered by making use of mobile technologies such as iPods, iPads, and other tablets in the classroom. Teachers will learn how to use these technologies and how to integrate their use into the classroom. Meets MTTS Standard V: Integrating Technology into the Curriculum and Instruction.

Grade Levels: All

Skill Levels: All

***Assistive Technologies***: This course introduces teachers to a variety of assistive technologies available online and through the district. Focus will be on practical use and meeting students IEP needs through technology. Meets MTTS Standard VI: Assistive Technologies.

Grade Levels: All

Skill Levels: Low to moderate

***Professional Learning Communities***: The course introduces teachers to their professional learning communities (PLCs). Each teacher will learn to access their Content area PLC and strategies for making the most out of their content online portals. Meets MTTS Standard VII: Professional Growth.

Grade Levels: Available at the following three levels: K-5, 6-8, 9-12

Skill Levels: All

**An Example two Week Workshop:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Mobile Technologies in the Classroom: A Two Week Workshop Overview** | | | | |
|  | **Day 1** | **Day 2** | **Day3** | **Day 4** |
| **Week 1** | **Introduction to Mobile Technologies**  **Goal**: Teachers will gain a broad understanding of mobile technologies and the use of Apps in the classroom.  **AM**: Introductory Presentation and overview of the training workshop.  **PM**: Presentation: Mobile devices and apps in the classroom. | **Mobile technologies: Best Practices**  **Goal:**  Teachers will understand and be able to apply best practices in integrating mobile technologies into the classroom.  **AM**: Presentation and discussion groups on how to best integrate mobile technologies into the classroom.  **PM**: Content Area Breakout sessions: Best Practices in the Content areas. | **Assistive Mobile Technologies**  **Goal**: Teachers will understand and be able to apply techniques using mobile technologies to meet the needs of all learners.  **AM**: Presentation and discussion groups on how to make use of the many adaptive technologies available for mobile devices.  **PM**: Content Area Breakout Sessions: Universal Design and Assistive Mobile technologies in the content areas. | **E-readers and Tablets**  **Goal:** Teachers will understand and be able to integrate E-readers and tablet computers into their classrooms.  **AM**: Presentation and discussion groups on the uniqueness and uses of electronic texts.  **PM**: Content Area Breakout Sessions: Content specific Apps for Tablets.  **Weekend Assignment**: Begin Mobile Technologies Unit Plan |
| **Week 2** | **Mobile Technologies and Podcasting I**  **Goal**: Teachers will understand and be able to effectively use podcasts in their classrooms.  **AM**: Presentation and discussion groups: Using podcasts to teach content  **PM**: Content Area Breakout Sessions: Content Specific Podcasts and Unit planning sharing. | **Mobile Technologies and Podcasting II**  **Goal**: Teachers will understand and be able to effective teach students to create podcasts in their classrooms.  **AM**: Presentation and discussion groups: student creation of video and audio podcasts.  **PM**: Content Area Breakout Sessions: Unit Planning continued | **Mobile Technologies and Writing**  **Goal:** Teachers will understand and be able to effectively integrate mobile publishing technologies into their classrooms.  **AM**: Presentation and discussion groups - Using mobile technologies to teach writing.  **PM**: Content Area Breakout Sessions: Content specific Web 2.0 applications and Unit Planning continued. | **Wrap-up and Unit Plan Presentations**  **Goal:** Teachers will review and display what they have learned throughout the workshop through the sharing of their Unit plans.  **AM**: Discussion Groups: Unit Plan Presentations  **PM**: Presentation: Final reflection and Workshop evaluations. |

**Instructional Strategies for *Mobile Technologies in the Classroom*:**

Teachers, like any learner, learn best through active engagement with material, and through collaboration. For this reason, the primary strategies for the workshop, *Mobile Technologies in the Classroom*, will be to have teachers using mobile technologies as much as possible, and sharing their ideas daily. Every session in the workshop will begin with a short presentation with the goal of teaching about the day's focus. From there, teachers will split into smaller groups with a problem to solve based on the presentation. Teachers may be challenged to brainstorm the uses of a particular application or device. Or they may be given an article to read and discuss in the smaller groups. A full group wrap up will lead into the lunch break each day.

The second half of each day's session will involve content and grade level breakout sessions in which a content area leader will be asked to come in an present on topics related to a teacher's particular content area. Again, the focus will be on teacher engagement. Instructors will be encouraged to have teachers use mobile technologies as much as possible and share tips and tricks to help integration into the classroom.

The final product for the workshop will be the presentation of teacher designed unit plans in which teachers will be asked to apply what they have learned in the workshop by designing a unit plan in which they infuse mobile technologies into what they actually teach. Teachers will be encouraged to teach the unit at some point during the school year and report their results on the support wiki that will be created to go with the training workshop.

**Evaluations**:

Workshop evaluation will be digitalized wherever possible in order to aid in the collection of data and the analysis of that data. Evaluation will consist primarily of the end of training evaluation form adapted for use on the next page. Evaluations will be collected, or submitted via Google apps at the end of every training session and will be made available to both technology coordinators and trainers in order to allow for consistent reflection and improvement of training services.

**PGCPS Technology Training Workshop Evaluation Form (adapted from www.haiweb.org/medicineprices/.../SampleTrainingEvalForm.doc)**

Workshop Attended:

Date:

Please indicate your impressions of the items listed below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 1. The training met my expectations. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |
| 2. I will be able to apply the knowledge learned. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |
| 3. The training objectives for each topic were identified and followed. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |
| 4. The content was organized and easy to follow. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |
| 5. The materials distributed were pertinent and useful. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |
| 6. The trainer was knowledgeable. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |
| 7. The quality of instruction was good. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |
| 8. The trainer met the workshop objectives. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |
| 9. Class participation and interaction were encouraged. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |
| 10. Adequate time was provided for questions and discussion. | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 | 🔿 |

How would you rate the training overall?

Excellent Good Average Poor Very poor

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**PGCPS Technology Training Workshop Evaluation page 2**

What aspects of this workship did you find worked best?

What aspects of this workshop could be improved?

Other comments:

Thank you for your participation in this workshop!

**A sample Workshop Syllabus:**

**Mobile Technologies in the Classroom: Week 1**

**Instructor: TBD**

**Location: TBD**

**Dates: TBD**

**Contact:**

**Workshop wiki:**

**Description:**

This course is intended to introduce teachers to the use of mobile technologies in their classrooms. Teachers will learn about the best practices in using mobile technologies, be introduced to mobile resources, and will practice implementing mobile technologies into their classroom through planning a single unit involving mobile technologies.

**Required Materials**

All participants should bring their district issued laptops, fully charged each morning. There will be opportunity to charge laptops during the day. However, outlets may be limited.

All other materials will be made available digitally through the workshop support wiki. Hardware used for the workshop (such as tablet computers) will also be provided for using during the workshop.

**Workshop Objectives for Week 1**

By the end of the week, teachers will be able to:

1. Indentify the different types of mobile technologies and their uses in the classroom.

2. Explain the best practices for integrating mobile technologies into their classroom.

3. Understand and apply assistive mobile technology to meeting the needs of all learners.

4. Identify the ways in which electronic texts are different from traditional texts and how to use E-readers in the classroom.

**Daily Topic Outlines**

**Day 1: Introduction to Mobile Technologies**

**AM Session**: Introduction to Mobile Technologies

**PM Session**: Presentation: Mobile devices and apps in the classroom.

**Day 2: Best Practices for Integrating Mobile Technologies in the Classroom**

**AM Session**: Best and Worst Practices: Tips and tricks for using mobile devices in your classroom.

**PM Session**: Content Area Breakouts: Best Practices in the Content areas.

**Day 3: Assistive Mobile Technologies**

**AM Session:** Mobile Devices and Adaptive Technologies in the Classroom

**PM Session**: Content Area Breakouts: Universal Design and Assistive Mobile technologies in the content areas.

**Day 4: E-readers and Tablets**

**AM Session**: E-readers, tablets, and Electronic Texts.

**PM Session**: Content Area Breakouts: Content specific Apps for Tablets.

**Weekly Evaluation to be completed before the end of session 4.**

**Assignment for Week 2: Before the second week of the training begins, please complete a pre-planning template for a unit you will design using mobile technologies in your content area and your classroom.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Technology Workshop Lesson Plan** | | | |
| **Your Name: Robert Tomes** | **Workshop Title**: Mobile Technologies in the Classroom | | **Day # 4** |
| **Subject of the day's workshop:**  E-readers, Tablets, and Electronic Books | | **Prerequisite Knowledge:**  Basic internet use, accessing a wiki, knowledge gained in days 1, 2, and 3 of this workshop. | |
| **Content (Describe in a paragraph)**  The focus of the fourth day is on electronic texts and the mobile devices we read them on; namely E-readers and tablet computers. Electronic texts are unique compared to traditional texts in many ways. Of the many differences, the ability to manipulate and use features like text to speech software are particularly intriguing for classroom teachers. Teachers should be comfortable manipulating electronic texts. Beyond electronic texts, many E-readers and tablet computers have access to other applications useful to teachers. Such applications looked at today include vocabulary building software such as flashcard apps and word puzzles. | | | |
| **List the objectives for this lesson.**  By the end of the day's workshop, teachers will be able to:  1. Identify and use the key features of an E-reader and tablet computer.  2. Identify the key characteristics of electronic texts.  3. Explain the benefits and pitfalls of using electronic books in the classroom.  4. Develop and share strategies and curricular ideas they can use in their classrooms. | | | |
| **How will you teach the lesson? Details help.**  AM Session:  1. Teachers will participate in a brief presentation introducing them to electronic texts and E-readers.  2. Splitting into smaller groups, teachers will be issued E-readers and instructed to access a reading and practice the following skills: highlighting text digitally, annotating, using a dictionary, and using text to speech technology.  3. Teachers will be given time to reflect and discuss how this was different/similar to using traditional texts.  PM Session:  1. Teachers will split off into Content Area Breakout sessions. Content area specialists will introduce other apps available for their content area.  2. Teachers will be given an opportunity to explore the tablet devices much more intimately and share resources and impressions.  3. Teachers will be introduced to the weekend assignment in preparation of the second week of the workshop.  4. The session will end with an evaluation of the week's sessions. | | | |
| **Additional materials you will use and how will you use them.**  1. LCD projector and introductory presentation.  2. A selected electronic text.  3. Enough tablet computers for each participant to use for the day.  4. Copies of the weekend assignment instructions. | | | |
| **Evaluation Strategies**  Participants will be monitored during the morning activity as they manipulate text on the electronic readers. More formally, participants will be evaluated at the end of week 4 as they must implement strategies learned in the design of a single unit plan related to what they teach.  At this point, participants will also fill out an evaluation of the workshop to be analyzed over the weekend by the instructors so that any questions or issues left unresolved from the first week may be addressed during week two. | | | |

**Training Material # 1: Presentation Notes**

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**Resources:**

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